



Brownfields Job Training and Development Demonstration Pilot

The Workplace Inc., Bridgeport, CT

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5105)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$1,000,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

BACKGROUND

EPA has selected The WorkPlace, Inc., in Bridgeport for a Brownfields Job Training and Development Demonstration Project. The Workplace's assessment pilot partner is the City of Bridgeport. The City also has received a Brownfields Cleanup Revolving Loan Fund Pilot. Two-thirds of the diverse residents of the City of Bridgeport (population 137,000) are minorities. English is not the primary language spoken in a third of the City's households. The poverty rate is over 17%, and Bridgeport's child poverty rate is among the highest in the nation.

Bridgeport was once a major manufacturing center. The loss of much of its manufacturing base has resulted in job loss, property deterioration, and economic distress. Bridgeport has identified more than 200 brownfields in the City. An estimated 1,200 jobs have been created through redevelopment stimulated by the Brownfields Assessment Pilot. However, there has been no concerted effort to employ local, disadvantaged persons in environmental fields. Environmental employer demand for brownfields technicians is very high and is expected to increase.

PILOT SNAPSHOT



Bridgeport, Connecticut

Date of Announcement:
December 2000

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot will train 45 participants as environmental technicians. Students will be recruited from neighborhoods impacted by brownfields within Bridgeport's federal Enterprise Community where an estimated 1,200 jobs have been created through redevelopment stimulated by the Brownfields Assessment Pilot.

Contacts:

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Visit the EPA Region 1 Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/region01/remed/brnflid/>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

The WorkPlace plans to train 45 participants, achieve an 80% placement rate, and support career placement of graduates for one year after the training is completed. Participants will be recruited from unemployed and underemployed residents, and high school seniors who have participated in the environmental education program, and who reside in the inner-city neighborhoods impacted by brownfields within Bridgeport's federal Enterprise Community. The Enterprise Community encompasses 8.3 square miles in the City's center. The 8-week Pilot training program will consist of courses in health, safety, and industrial hygiene; lead and asbestos abatement; and 40-hour HAZWOPER, including training in the use of innovative assessment and remediation technologies. Two additional weeks of internships will be conducted after the classroom training.

The WorkPlace's training efforts will be supported by organizations such as the City of Bridgeport's Office of Planning and Economic Development, Tufts University, Environmental Management Geological Consultants, Inc., Career Resources, Inc., Vita Nuova, ten community-based organizations, seven local companies, and various local public agencies. Seven local companies have committed to hiring graduates of the Pilot training program.

ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting outreach to recruit residents from unemployed and underemployed residents, and high school seniors who have participated in the environmental education program, and who reside in the inner-city neighborhoods impacted by brownfields within Bridgeport's federal Enterprise Community;
- Conducting environmental technician training, including courses in the use of innovative assessment and cleanup technologies; and
- Supporting career placement of students for one year after the job training is completed.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.